

Assembly Bill 414

Digital Equity Bill of Rights

AB 414

Would establish digital equity as a civil right and classifies internet access as an essential service to which all California residents are entitled.

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Why is it needed?

About 1.3 million Californians — and roughly one million students — lack high-speed internet at home. California is the center of the global technology industry, yet just down the road from Silicon Valley, thousands of families can't get online. And in some of the state's rural and remote areas, broadband isn't even an option.

Broadband access is an important issue for schools across the nation and California is no different. Schools, districts and county offices of education are moving further into the digital age with assessments, instructional programs, tutoring and remediation initiatives being offered via computer. Further, some of the fastest growing training programs for students involve coding and digital arts. For many students, schools and districts, however, inconsistent access to the internet and the broadband connections needed for remote learning creates what is known as the "homework gap."

How does it work?

AB 414 provides a guiding set of principles that will set the state on the path to closing the digital divide and ensuring every Californian has the high speed-internet access needed to fully engage in modern society. Specifically, AB 414 declares that all Californians should have broadband that:

- ▶ is sufficient and reliable
- ▶ is ubiquitous
- ▶ is affordable
- ▶ ensures public safety and maintains peace of mind
- ▶ improves quality of life
- ▶ supports economic prosperity
- ▶ attracts capital investment
- ▶ supports innovation and research
- ▶ empowers and enables participation in the democracy



How will it help?

Being on the wrong side of the digital divide means you're locked out of opportunities related to education, health, employment, finance, entertainment, government and commerce. Increasingly, internet access is a necessity for full engagement in society and everyday life.

California has a moral, legal and economic interest in ensuring all students have access to a high-quality education. Uneven broadband access undermines the state's ability to achieve this goal and threatens its civic well-being and economic prosperity. AB 414 establishes a standard of universal access to high-speed broadband that will support California students, strengthen our schools, connect our communities and brighten our future.